

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

Provided is a scanning optical system in which the influence of structural birefringence resulting from a relationship between the arrangement direction  
5 of a fine grating structure and polarization planes is reduced to obtain a preferable optical performance, and an image forming apparatus using the scanning optical system. In the scanning optical system, a light flux emitted from a light source unit is  
10 deflected by a deflection unit. The light flux deflected by the deflection unit is guided onto a surface to be scanned by a scanning optical unit having a fine structural grating on at least one optical surface. The surface to be scanned is  
15 scanned with the light flux. The fine structural grating has a triangular grating in which triangular grating parts are arranged in one dimensional direction. When a grating height of a triangular structure of the triangular grating is given by  $h$ , a  
20 grating pitch thereof is given by  $P$ , and a wavelength of the light flux emitted from the light source unit is given by  $\lambda$ , conditions of  $0.23\lambda \leq h$  and  $0.52 < h/P$  are satisfied.